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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JAKARTA 002819

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DEPARTMENT FOR EAP, EAP/MTS, EAP/ANP, EAP/PD  
NSC FOR EPHU

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/04/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINS](#) [KPAO](#) [ID](#)

SUBJECT: PAPUA -- ENCOURAGING INDONESIA TOWARD GREATER  
OPENNESS

REF: A. JAKARTA 2783

[B](#). JAKARTA 2769

[C](#). JAKARTA 2735

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Classified By: Pol/C Joseph Legend Novak, reasons 1.4 (b,d).

[1](#). (C) SUMMARY: Seeking GOI support for planned USG visits to Papua, poloff met October 4 with key Department of Foreign Affairs (DEPLU) Papua contact. Poloff--more generally--also pressed for greater access for diplomats and foreign media. Contact responded that DEPLU was committed to greater openness, but has to contend with other GOI bodies that may not be so inclined such as the military. That said, the Indonesian government had recently approved a visit by a TIME magazine journalist. END SUMMARY.

[2](#). (C) OUR PLANS: Poloff met October 4 with Banua Manik, Director of Diplomatic Security at DEPLU, to discuss planned USG trips to Papua. Poloff first thanked Manik for his help facilitating his recent travel to Papua, which had been delayed due to difficulties receiving permission for the trip (reftels). (Note: Manik chairs the GOI's interagency committee that considers requests from diplomats, foreign government officials and journalists to visit Papua.) The proposed trips include:

- The Charge's October 6-10 attendance at the Asmat Cultural Festival near Timika;
- the Ambassador's proposed November visit to Jayapura, Timika and other possible locations; and,
- A planned December visit by Representative Faleomavaega of American Samoa.

Manik replied that he looked forward to working with us on the proposed visits. DEPLU strongly supports such visits, although some Indonesian government bodies like the military sometimes do not. (Note: DEPLU has approved the Charge's proposed travel. GOI officials have also told us that they would allow Rep. Faleomavaega's December visit to Papua after having denied his request to travel there in July.)

[3](#). (C) ...AND THE BIG PICTURE: More generally, Poloff noted that it would help if the GOI took a big picture look at the problem of travel to Papua. Poloff stressed that greater access to Papua for diplomats and journalists would help

dispel many of the myths and rumors that circulate about what is happening there.

¶4. (C) Manik replied that DEPLU supported greater openness in Papua and provided an overview of DEPLU's recent efforts toward this end. He had just finished accompanying GOI officials from Indonesian Embassies in Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, the United States, and other countries on a visit to Papua. They had met with the governor, police chief, members of the DPR-P and MRP (provincial legislative bodies), and civil society representatives in Jayapura. They also toured U.S. company Freeport-McMoRan's mining operations in Timika. DEPLU hopes to arrange more visits to Papua by Indonesian diplomats and other officials so they can answer questions about what is happening there based on first-hand observations.

¶5. (C) Manik also explained that DEPLU hoped to organize regular visits to Papua for members of Jakarta's diplomatic corps, although it had not yet planned any specific trips. Poloff responded that this effort would help diplomats better understand the situation in Papua and encouraged DEPLU to move forward with its plans. Manik agreed, but reiterated that some elements of the GOI are still suspicious of foreign diplomatic interest in Papua. Because of this, DEPLU had to proceed slowly, he claimed.

¶6. (C) A GREEN LIGHT FOR TIME: Finally, there was good news on the journalist front. Manik said the GOI had recently approved the Papua visit of American journalist Jason Tedjasukmana of TIME Magazine. In the past, the GOI has been particularly reluctant to allow foreign journalists to travel to Papua. Manik agreed that openness for journalists was important, but he said that the government had to be cautious. Many journalists were inclined to write "exaggerated" accounts of developments in Papua because it attracted more readers, he asserted. Poloff--noting that the

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action re the TIME journalist was positive--said journalists should be allowed to report on what they found and urged DEPLU to allow free access for all journalists.  
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